

MOVING & RENTING · GUIDE 09 · 2026

THE NEW HOME SERIES

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Broadband in a new-build home *made simple.*

Brand-new homes often have the fibre already in the ground, yet the address will not show in the checkers for a little while. Here is exactly why that happens, how to fix it quickly, and how to stay online from day one.

Free fibre

ON SITES OF 20+ NEW HOMES

Openreach installs full fibre at no cost

The address

IS USUALLY THE REAL HOLD-UP

Not the fibre, which is often already there

26 Dec 2026

GIGABIT REQUIRED ON NEW ENGLISH HOMES

Building Regulations make it the norm



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A new-build home is usually fibre-ready before the checkers catch up.

Moving into a brand-new home is exciting, and the broadband news is mostly good. Full fibre is now the default for new developments, and Openreach installs it free on sites of twenty homes or more, so the fastest connection in the country is often already waiting in the wall. The common frustration is not the fibre itself; it is that the address takes a little while to appear in the systems that providers use to take an order.

This guide explains, in plain English, why a new-build address sometimes will not show in a broadband checker, how to get it added quickly, what to do about developer arrangements and the little white box on your wall, and how to stay online from the day you move in. Every figure is sourced at the end. Once your address is live in the system, a postcode check turns up your options in seconds.

The fibre is usually there already. Get your address onto the postcode file, and a brand-new home goes from no broadband to gigabit-ready in days, not months.

BROADBANDSWITCH.UK EDITORIAL TEAM

New-build broadband, at a glance

Free

FULL FIBRE ON SITES OF 20+ HOMES

Openreach installs FTTP at no developer cost.

The address

IS THE USUAL HOLD-UP, NOT THE FIBRE

It must be on the postcode file to order.

~4 days

USUAL ROYAL MAIL ADDRESS UPDATE

Though it can run longer at busy times.

Up to 1 Gbit/s

TYPICAL NEW-BUILD FULL-FIBRE SPEED

Future-proof from the day you move in.

26 Dec 2026

GIGABIT REQUIRED ON NEW ENGLISH HOMES

Building Regulations make it standard.

No postcode?

A 4G OR 5G HUB STILL WORKS

It needs no fixed line, so you stay online.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

If your new home will not show in a checker, the fibre is probably already there and the address just needs adding. Sort that, and you are connected fast. In the meantime, a 4G or 5G hub keeps you online with no fixed line at all.

What's covered.

Each section opens with a short Quick Answer so you can scan straight to what you need. When you want live options for your address, a postcode check at broadbandswitch.uk/compare does the rest.

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The new-build picture in sixty seconds.

QUICK ANSWER

In a new-build home the fibre is often already installed, because full fibre is now the default for new developments and Openreach fits it free on sites of twenty homes or more. The usual reason you cannot order yet is that your address has not appeared in the postcode systems providers use. Get the address added, use a 4G or 5G hub in the meantime, and you will be connected quickly.

New-build broadband sounds complicated, but it nearly always comes down to one thing: the address, not the fibre. Once you understand that, the path to getting online is short and clear. Here is the whole picture in brief.

- ✓ **The fibre is usually there.** New developments are built with full fibre as standard, so the fast connection is often already waiting behind the little white box on your wall.
- ✓ **The address is the common hold-up.** Providers can only take an order once your home is on the Royal Mail postcode file and the Openreach database, which can lag behind move-in day.
- ✓ **It is usually a quick fix.** Getting the address registered often takes only a few days, and you or the developer can chase it along.
- ✓ **You need not wait offline.** A 4G or 5G hub connects with no fixed line and no postcode dependency, so you stay online from day one.
- ✓ **The future is bright.** From late 2026, new homes in England must be built gigabit-ready, so new-build connectivity keeps getting better.

GOOD TO KNOW

If a neighbour a few doors down can already order broadband but you cannot, that is a strong sign the network is in and only your specific address is missing from the database. That is reassuring, because it is exactly the kind of thing that is quick to put right.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Do not assume a new build means slow or no broadband. The fast line is usually already there; you simply need your address in the system, and a hub bridges any short gap.

Why your new home will not show in the checker.

QUICK ANSWER

Broadband providers take orders by looking your address up in the Royal Mail Postcode Address File and the Openreach database. A brand-new home often is not on those systems yet, because the address has to be created and registered first. So even when the fibre is physically installed, a checker can return “no service” simply because it cannot find the address.

This is the single most common new-build frustration, and understanding it removes most of the worry. The connection and the paperwork are two separate things, and it is usually the paperwork that is catching up.

What is actually happening

- ✓ **Orders rely on the address being listed.** Providers on the Openreach network can only sell you broadband once your address is in the postcode file and the Openreach database.
- ✓ **New addresses are created, then registered.** The developer or local council assigns the street name and number, and the address is then added to Royal Mail's file.
- ✓ **There is a natural lag.** Royal Mail usually adds an address within a few working days, but at busy times this can stretch to several weeks, which is what holds up ordering.
- ✓ **The fibre may already be in.** None of this means the network is missing. Very often the fibre is installed and simply waiting for the address to go live.

POSTCODE VERSUS UPRN

Sometimes a checker cannot find your postcode but can find your UPRN, the unique property reference number for your home. If a provider offers a UPRN lookup, that can unlock an order even while the postcode catches up. Your local council's planning pages often list the UPRN.

The two things that must line up

What is needed	Who sorts it	Typical timing
The address on the postcode file	Developer or local council, via Royal Mail	Usually a few working days, sometimes weeks
The fibre network on site	Openreach or an alternative network	Often installed before completion
The address in the Openreach database	Flows from the postcode file	Shortly after the address is registered
Your broadband order	You, once the above are live	Standard order and activation

When all of these line up, ordering becomes completely normal. The job, then, is simply to make sure the address is registered and to keep an eye on when it goes live. That is what the next section covers.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

A “no service” result on a new build usually means “cannot find this address”, not “no fibre here”. Fix the address and the order follows.

Getting your address onto the system.

QUICK ANSWER

First, check whether your address is on the Royal Mail postcode file. If it is not, ask your developer to confirm they have registered it, or submit it yourself through Royal Mail, which is free and often sorted in a few days. Once it appears, run a postcode check to see your options. If only the UPRN is recognised, ask providers whether they can order against that.

This is the practical heart of the guide. Work through these steps in order and you will either be able to order straight away, or you will know exactly what to chase.

- 1 Check the Royal Mail postcode file.** Look your new address up on Royal Mail's find a postcode tool. If it appears, the address is registered and the hold-up is elsewhere.
- 2 Ask the developer.** If it is missing, ask the developer or site manager to confirm they have registered the address with Royal Mail, as this is normally their job.
- 3 Register it yourself if needed.** You can submit your address to Royal Mail directly. It is free and often added within a few working days.
- 4 Try the UPRN route.** If a provider supports a UPRN lookup, you may be able to order even before the postcode catches up. Find your UPRN via the council's planning pages.
- 5 Run a postcode check.** Once the address is live, compare what is available so you order the best deal for your new home.

SISTER-SITE FAIRNESS CHECK

See what reaches your new street

BroadbandMap.org.uk is a free, postcode-level UK coverage map showing which technologies, full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G, reach which streets. On a new development it helps you see what is being built out nearby, even while your own address is still being added.

Part of the same SearchSwitchSave network as BroadbandSwitch.uk. Visit broadbandmap.org.uk.

A simple message to your developer

If the address is missing, a short, friendly note to the developer usually gets it moving. Being specific makes it easy for them to act.

A LINE THAT WORKS

Try: "Please could you confirm that our address has been registered with Royal Mail and added to the Openreach database, and let me know the date it goes live? I would like to order broadband as soon as it is listed." Polite, specific, and easy to answer.

Keep a note of when you asked and what you were told. If the address is registered but still will not show after a couple of weeks, that is the point to escalate, which we cover in Section 07. Most of the time, though, a quick check and a friendly nudge are all it takes.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Check the postcode file, nudge the developer, register it yourself if needed. Those three moves clear the great majority of new-build broadband hold-ups.

Developer deals and single-provider sites.

QUICK ANSWER

Some developments are built on a single network, and occasionally a developer points new residents to one preferred provider. That is fine as a starting point, but you are usually free to choose any provider that serves the network at your address. Check which networks are present, then compare, so you pick the best deal rather than simply the first one suggested.

New developments come connected in a few different ways, and knowing which applies to you helps you get the best choice and price. Most of the time you have more options than the welcome pack suggests.

- ✓ **Openreach full fibre.** The most common setup. Because many providers sell over the Openreach network, you usually get a wide choice once your address is live.
- ✓ **An alternative network.** Some sites are built by a single alternative full-fibre provider. Choice may be narrower, but the speeds are typically excellent.
- ✓ **A developer-suggested provider.** A welcome pack may recommend one provider. This is a convenient starting point, not an obligation, so it is worth comparing before you commit.
- ✓ **More than one network.** Larger sites sometimes have both Openreach and an alternative network, which means even more choice for you.

FREE FIBRE BEHIND THE SCENES

On sites of twenty or more new homes, Openreach installs full fibre at no cost to the developer, and full fibre is now the default choice for new developments. That is why so many new builds are gigabit-capable from the start, even if the address takes a little time to go live.

The little white box: your ONT explained.

QUICK ANSWER

That small white box on your wall is the optical network terminal, or ONT. It is where the fibre enters your home, and it is a sign your home is fibre-ready. Your provider sends a router that plugs into it. On full fibre there is no need for the old phone socket, and for most new builds the setup is a simple self-install with no engineer visit required.

If you have spotted a neat white box already fitted, that is good news. It means the fibre has been brought to your home and you are most of the way there. Here is what it is and how it works.

- ✓ **What it is.** The ONT is the endpoint of the fibre line inside your home. It converts the light signal into a connection your router can use.
- ✓ **What you do with it.** When you order broadband, your provider posts a router. You plug the router into the ONT, follow the simple setup, and you are online.
- ✓ **No old phone line needed.** Full fibre does not use the old copper phone socket, and the old copper network is being retired anyway, so a new build is set up for the future.
- ✓ **Usually a self-install.** With the ONT already fitted, most new-build connections are a quick self-install, with no engineer appointment to wait in for.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

The white box is your friend. It tells you the fibre is there, and it usually means getting online is as simple as plugging in the router your provider sends.

Staying online from day one.

QUICK ANSWER

If your fixed line is not orderable yet, a 4G or 5G home broadband hub keeps you online with no fixed install, no engineer and no postcode dependency. It arrives by post, plugs into the mains, and connects in minutes. It is the cleanest way to stay connected while your new-build address goes live, and you can cancel or keep it once the fibre is ready.

The best part of a new build is that you need never sit offline waiting. A mobile broadband hub sidesteps the address issue entirely, because it does not rely on a postcode lookup at all.

- ✓ **No postcode needed.** A 4G or 5G hub connects over the mobile network, so it works even before your address is on the postcode file.
- ✓ **Online in minutes.** Plug it into the mains, connect over Wi-Fi, and the whole home is online, with no engineer and no drilling.
- ✓ **Flexible terms.** Choose a rolling one-month plan and you can stop it the moment your full fibre is ready, or keep it if you like it.
- ✓ **Check coverage first.** A quick coverage check confirms a strong signal at your new home before you order the hub.

A NEAT BRIDGE

Because a hub needs no fixed line, it is the perfect bridge for a new build. Use it from moving day, switch over to your full fibre once the address is live, and you will not have spent a single day offline.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

A new-build address delay never has to mean no internet. A plug-in hub keeps you connected from the day you move in, then you move to full fibre when it is ready.

If you are still stuck: how to escalate.

QUICK ANSWER

If your address is registered but still will not show after a couple of weeks, escalate calmly and in order. Confirm the address on the Royal Mail file, ask your chosen provider to raise it with Openreach, ask the developer to chase the network completion, and try a UPRN order. Persistence with the right people almost always gets a new build connected.

Most new-build hold-ups clear on their own once the address goes live. For the few that linger, here is the order to work through so nothing falls between the cracks.

- 1 Confirm the address is registered.** Re-check the Royal Mail postcode file so you know the first step is genuinely done.
- 2 Ask your provider to raise it.** A chosen provider can often log the missing address with Openreach so the database is updated.
- 3 Ask the developer to chase network completion.** If the on-site network is not yet handed over, the developer is best placed to push it along.
- 4 Try a UPRN order.** Ask providers whether they can take an order against your UPRN while the postcode catches up.
- 5 Keep a hub running meanwhile.** Stay online on 4G or 5G so the wait costs you nothing in the meantime.

Address live? Check what your new home can get in about ten seconds.

Postcode in, real prices out. No name, no email, no phone number needed.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

FREE · INDEPENDENT · 35+ PROVIDERS · UPDATED DAILY

Five mistakes to avoid.

Steer around these and a new-build connection comes together smoothly, often faster than you expect.

- ⚠ **Assuming there is no fibre.** A “no service” result usually means the address is missing, not the network. Check the postcode file before you worry.
- ⚠ **Leaving the address to chance.** Confirm the developer has registered it, and register it yourself if needed, rather than waiting and hoping.
- ⚠ **Taking the welcome-pack provider without comparing.** A suggested provider is a starting point, not the only option; compare to get the best deal.
- ⚠ **Sitting offline while you wait.** A 4G or 5G hub keeps you connected from day one, so there is no need to go without.
- ⚠ **Booking an engineer you may not need.** With an ONT already fitted, most new builds are a simple self-install, so check before assuming a visit is required.

Moving into a new build? Compare the address in about ten seconds.

Postcode in, real prices out. No name, no email, no phone number needed.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

FREE · INDEPENDENT · 35+ PROVIDERS · UPDATED DAILY

Frequently asked questions.

Why can't I order broadband at my new build?

Almost always because your address is not yet on the Royal Mail postcode file and the Openreach database. Providers look your address up to take an order, so if it is not listed, the checker returns no service even when the fibre is installed. Getting the address registered fixes it.

How long does it take to get connected in a new build?

It varies. Once your address is live in the systems, ordering and activation are standard. The main variable is how quickly the address is registered, which is usually a few working days but can run to several weeks at busy times. A 4G or 5G hub keeps you online in the meantime.

My new build address is not showing anywhere. What do I do?

Check the Royal Mail find a postcode tool first. If it is missing, ask your developer to confirm they have registered it, or submit it to Royal Mail yourself, which is free. If only your UPRN is recognised, ask providers whether they can order against that while the postcode catches up.

Is there really fibre in my new home already?

Very likely. Full fibre is the default for new developments, and Openreach installs it free on sites of twenty or more homes. The small white box on your wall, the ONT, is the sign that fibre has been brought into your home.

Do I have to use the provider my developer suggested?

Usually not. A developer may recommend one provider as a convenient starting point, but you are generally free to choose any provider that serves the network at your address. It is worth comparing to get the best deal rather than taking the first suggestion.

Will I need an engineer to install it?

Often not. If the ONT is already fitted, most new-build connections are a simple self-install with a router your provider posts to you. Your provider will tell you if a visit is needed for your specific setup.

What can I use until my fixed line is ready?

A 4G or 5G home broadband hub. It connects over the mobile network with no fixed install and no postcode dependency, so it works from day one. Choose a rolling plan and you can stop it once your full fibre is live, or keep it if it suits you.

Address gone live? See what your new home can get.

Live UK comparison. Postcode in, deals out. The average switcher saves £180 to £292 a year.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

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Editorial standards.

This guide is part of the Moving & Renting Broadband series from BroadbandSwitch.uk, the UK's independent consumer broadband resource. It is general consumer information, not advice on your specific circumstances.

How we work

- ✓ We name the author and reviewer on every dated guide.
- ✓ We rank every deal in our comparison tool by total contract cost, never by paid placement.
- ✓ We earn a commission when readers switch through our journey; this never changes which deals we show or their order.
- ✓ We publish a public corrections log; any factual error is logged, dated and credited.
- ✓ We see the best in every provider in the British market and frame changes as positive consumer outcomes wherever we honestly can.

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- **RightSpeed.co.uk** is an eight-question speed-needs calculator that right-sizes your plan before you overspend.
- **UKSpeedTest.co.uk** (branded Pulse) is a free, no-signup, ad-free speed test for download, upload and jitter.
- **HowFast.uk** is a quick browser-based line and performance check.
- **BroadbandMap.org.uk** is a postcode-level coverage map of full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G.
- **ParentalControl.uk** is a free home-network and online-safety tool, useful when families set up a new home.

About the author



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Got a question this guide did not answer? Reach out on LinkedIn and a real member of our team will be glad to help.

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